



**Request for City Council Committee Action
From the Department of Health & Family Support**

Date: March 31, 2003

To: HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

Subject: QUARTERLY UPDATE ON PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS

Recommendation

Receive and file.

Previous Directives

None

Prepared or Submitted by: Becky McIntosh, Director of Planning & Administration
Phone: x2884

Approved by:

David S. Doth, Commissioner of Health & Family Support

Presenters in Committee: Becky McIntosh
Pam Blixt, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coordinator

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

☒ No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget.
(If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)

Background/Supporting Information Attached

The Department is requesting to provide a quarterly update on planning activities under our federal Public Health Emergency Preparedness grant. The update will also include the most current information on preparations for smallpox vaccination clinics for selected health and emergency response staff.

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING
Department of Health & Family Support

COUNCIL UPDATE: FIRST QUARTER 2003

Key Accomplishments under the federal public health emergency preparedness planning grant:

- The Department has taken the lead in assessing the public health role in a chemical/hazardous materials incident, and is working with local public health in the seven county metro area, the state agencies of health, DEM, and PCA, the Metro CAER group, and others in planning. City staff is planning an exercise for this summer, which will be the response phase of the chlorine terrorist exercise that was done last year.
- The department has taken the lead in organizing a metro-wide group of representatives from local and state public health department in developing a plan to assist the vulnerable and multicultural populations in the event of a health care emergency. A gap analysis has been completed of organizations serving these communities to determine the need for public education and assistance in the event of an emergency.
- A contract with Hennepin County for joint public health preparedness planning is being finalized, and a joint City/County public health leadership committee is in place.
- The department has implemented a City Public Health Emergency Preparedness Advisory Team, with representatives from Emergency Preparedness, Fire, Police, and Environmental Services.
- Department staff have developed a public information presentation format on public health emergency preparedness planning that was presented to all public health staff and the Public Health Advisory Committee.
- A biological tabletop exercise was completed on December 11, 2002 at the Minneapolis Convention Center with 340 participants using the Metropolitan Medical Response System. In the follow-up discussion, concerns were raised about incident command and resource coordination at the state and local level. Department staff provided leadership by starting the dialogue to clarify state and local public health roles and responsibilities.
- The city is a part of the state wide Health Alert Network, which is activated for communication regarding outbreaks or critical health concerns. MHFS plans to implement 24/7 response capability by the third quarter of 2003.

Smallpox Vaccination Program

- MHFS has been working with Hennepin County Community Health in planning, implementing, and evaluating Phase I of the vaccination program that focused on selected public health and hospital staff. Two City staff were vaccinated, and trained to be vaccinators in anticipation of Phase II. Seven non-vaccinated staff have participated in vaccination clinics as screeners and educators to ensure preparedness in the event of need for mass clinics throughout the City.
- Health staff, along with members of the advisory group, have been working with Risk Management, Human Resources, and the Attorney's office on issues related to Phase II of the smallpox vaccination program
- In preparation for Phase II, health and fire staff reviewed fire station communal living practices to establish requirements to safeguard non-vaccinated fire personnel.

- Planning for Phase II is beginning and implementation may start in the second quarter, and will likely involve participation by City Fire and Police.

Next Steps

- By June 2003 the Department, with assistance from Fire and Attorney's, will complete a written agreement between the City and County on roles and responsibilities for a response to a public health emergency. It will include such information as legal liabilities, confidentiality of records, dispute resolution, financial responsibilities, scene security, credentialing, state and federal liaison, and how/when the terms of the agreement are activated. By May 1, MHFS will initiate joint planning with the City on issues of command structure including incident command training.
- Public health staff will help plan training for City of Minneapolis public officials to take place later this year.
- Implemented with the Fire Department information for all city employees on personal emergency preparedness.
- MHFS staff will provide leadership for countywide emergency preparedness planning for public health in the areas of mental health and radiological events with state and other local public health departments.
- Staff will assist in planning and implementing the Citizen Emergency Response Team program for neighborhood groups and the public health department staff.